

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SSO-00 ERDA-05 NSCE-00 ACDA-07

OMB-01 EUR-12 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIE-00 INRE-00 /073 W

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O R 100240Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1639

INFO AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

CINCPACFLT

CNO WASHDC

S E C R E T WELLINGTON 2551

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, NZ, FJ

SUBJ: NPW VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND AND FIJI

REF: (A) WELLINGTON 0836 (DTG 042117Z MAR 76), (B) SUVA 444

(DTG 230409Z APR 76)

1. CALL ON PRIME MINISTER MULDOON BY SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE REED AND AMBASSADOR SELDEN WAS EXTREMELY CORDIAL AND A BROAD RANGE OF DEFENSE-RELATED ISSUES WAS CANDIDLY DISCUSSED.

2. PRIME MINISTER MULDOON EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER SOVIET AND CHINESE OVERTURES TO BOTH TONGA AND WESTERN SAMOA. HE PLANS TO TALK FORCEFULLY AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO BOTH KING OF TONGA AND PRIME MINISTER OF WESTERN SAMOA ABOUT PITFALLS OF ENTERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS WITH SOVIETS AND CHINESE. ALSO INDICATED HE INTENDS TO CHANNEL MORE OF NEW ZEALAND'S EXTERNAL AID TO THIS AREA OF PACIFIC, BUT THAT NO PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF THIS INTENTION IS PRESENTLY PLANNED.

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3. MULDOON INDICATED THAT SUBSTANTIAL SECTOR OF PUBLIC OPINION IS AGAINST HIS ANNOUNCED DECISION TO ALLOW NPW VISITS BUT STATED THIS WOULD NOT DETER HIM. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE WOULD BE HELPED IMMEASURABLY WITH THIS PROBLEM IF THE TRUXTON WERE TO STOP IN FIJI EN ROUTE FIRST CALL IN NEW ZEALAND. HE WENT ON TO REQUEST THAT WE MAKE AN EFFORT TO HAVE THIS DONE. THIS APPROACH IS A REASONABLE ONE, AND I RECOMMENDED IT IN MARCH (REF A) WHEN WE BEGAN PLANNING TRUXTON VISIT TO THIS AREA.

4. LOOKING BEYOND THE INITIAL VISIT, THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATED THAT HE BELIEVES IT WOULD HELP DEFUSE THE POLITICAL ISSUE OF NPW VISITS TO SCHEDULE FOLLOW-UP VISIT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. HE MENTIONED THE ENTERPRISE BY NAME, NOTING THAT HE HAD BEEN AMONG THOSE HELICOPTERED OUT TO HER FOR A VISIT WHEN THE ENTERPRISE WAS ANCHORED IN COOK STRAIT IN 1964.

5. IN CONFORMANCE WITH PRACTICE IN NEW ZEALAND OF OFFICIAL VISITORS MAKING COURTESY CALL ON LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, SECRETARY REED ALSO CALLED ON BILL ROWLING, WHO HAS MADE A POLITICAL ISSUE OF NPW VISITS. MR. ROWLING EMPHASIZED HOW UNPOPULAR HE BELIEVED A VISIT WOULD BE AND HIS VIEW THAT IT WOULD SOLIDIFY ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT.

6. IF FOR WHATEVER REASON VISIT DOES NOT MATERIALIZE IT WOULD BE A GREAT POLITICAL COUP FOR ROWLING AND SETBACK FOR MULDOON.

7. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT WE CONTINUE TO BE AS COOPERATIVE AND HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE TO HIGHLY PRO-AMERICAN PRESENT GOVERNMENT. I URGE SPECIFICALLY THAT WE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO HAVE THE TRUXTON VISIT FIJI PRIOR TO VISIT HERE AND THAT A NPW FOLLOW-UP TO TRUXTON VISIT BE PLANNED AS QUICKLY AS PRACTICABLE. IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF WE COULD ARRANGE BRIEFINGS FOR GOF OFFICIALS AS PER REF B, AND I URGE THIS BE DONE IMMEDIATELY. SELDEN

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